§ 18B-1116. Exclusive outlets prohibited.

(a) Prohibitions. – It shall be unlawful for any manufacturer, bottler, or wholesaler of any alcoholic beverages, or for any officer, director, or affiliate thereof, either directly or indirectly to do any of the following:

(1) Require that an alcoholic beverage retailer purchase any alcoholic beverages from that person to the full or partial exclusion of any other alcoholic beverages offered for sale by other persons in this State.

(2) Have any direct or indirect financial interest in the business of any alcoholic beverage retailer in this State or in the premises where the business of any alcoholic beverage retailer in this State is conducted.

(3) Lend or give to any alcoholic beverage retailer in this State or the retailer's employee or to the owner of the premises where the business of any alcoholic beverage retailer in this State is conducted, any money, service, equipment, furniture, fixtures or any other thing of value.

(4) Provide draft line cleaning services to an alcoholic beverage retailer unless the retailer pays the fair market value for such services.

A brewery qualifying under subdivision (7) or (8) of G.S. 18B-1104(a) is not subject to the provisions of this section concerning financial interests in, and lending or giving things of value to, a wholesaler or retailer with respect to the brewery's transactions with the retail business on its premises or other retail locations allowed under G.S. 18B-1104(a)(8). The brewery is subject to the provisions of this subsection, however, with respect to its transactions with all other wholesalers and retailers.

A distillery is not subject to the provisions of this section concerning financial interests in, and lending or giving things of value to, a retailer with respect to the distillery's transactions with the retail business allowed on its premises under G.S. 18B-1105(a)(4). The distillery is subject to the provisions of this subsection, however, with respect to its transactions with all other retailers.

(b) Exemptions. – The Commission may grant exemptions from the provisions of this section. Any exemption entered by the Commission in which any brewery or any officer, director, or affiliate of the brewery has a direct or indirect financial interest in the business of any retailer beyond the number of additional retail locations authorized by G.S. 18B-1104 shall prohibit the brewery's malt beverages from being sold to or purchased by that retailer. In determining whether to grant an exemption, the Commission shall consider the public welfare, the quantity and value of articles involved, established trade customs not contrary to the public interest, and the purposes of this section.

(c) As used in this section, the phrase "giving things of value" shall not include the dividing or removing of individual containers of alcohol from larger packages of alcohol or the delivery of such to the retail permittee. (1945, c. 708, s. 6; 1953, c. 1207, s. 1; 1971, c. 872, s. 1; 1981, c. 412, s. 2; c. 747, s. 63; 1993, c. 415, s. 25; 2005-380, s. 3; 2014-115, s. 28.2(c); 2017-87, ss. 11, 16(f); 2019-18, s. 3; 2019-182, s. 4(b); 2024-41, s. 32(a).)